



# Town of Sudbury

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<https://sudbury.ma.us/transportation/>

## **Sudbury Transportation Committee**

### **Minutes**

**Friday, August 6, 2021**

**10:30 AM**

**Via Town Zoom Conference Call**

Core Members Present: Daniel Carty, Sandy Lasky, Alice Sapienza, Doug Frey, Debra Galloway

Core Members Absent: Adam Duchesneau

Advisory Group Present:

Advisory Group Absent: Charlie Dunn, Scott Nix, Beth Suedmeyer, Carmine Gentile, Bethany Hadvab

Guests: Ana Cristina Oliveira

### **Confirmation of Quorum**

The statutory requirements as to notice having been complied with, Dan Carty as chair convened the meeting at 10:30am. Dan made an announcement that this was a public meeting, and the meeting was being recorded via Zoom and by Sudbury TV for future viewing.

### **Selection of Clerk**

Debra volunteered to take meeting minutes.

### **Administrative Updates**

Dan mentioned that the Committee is interested in possible funding options that may be available from the State or Federal government. We invited State Rep. Carmine Gentile to attend this meeting, but he was not available. He will be invited to a future meeting to assist us in understanding our options. Alice mentioned that Representative Gentile's aide was asked to send information about coming funding RFPs when available. Dan C to check back with Rep. Gentile on this.

Dan Carty reported that the Transportation Committee and the Committee membership was extended by the Select Board. The Committee will be in operation year to year. The Committee will be presenting a report on the transportation pilots at a fall Select Board meeting. The Committee is not intended to be a permanent committee.

### **Making the Connections**

Dan Carty, Alice Sapienza, and Adam Duchesneau attended the Making the Connections meeting on July 28. Several of the towns in the group have had difficulty starting a subsidized program. However, the project manager at Nelson/Nygaard will be collecting information from each town on what they are offering and any issues they are facing.

Doug Frey reported that he talked with Annex Transportation and they are available to talk with the towns in the Making the Connections group regarding services they offer. Doug will share the contact information with Alice.

### **Go Sudbury! Uber/Taxi Program**

Dan Carty shared a document called “3 Month Summary” created by Alice from Uber data on ridership (part of Supporting documents”). The July invoice from Tommy’s taxi was not available for this report. Alice took an average and made an estimate of expenditures for Tommy’s. Since the beginning of the pilot, \$11,000 has been spent on the Go Sudbury Taxi program. Dan also shared a preliminary spreadsheet created by Adam Duchesneau that shows the source and use of funds for the pilots. There was a total of \$30,000 of MAPC (Metropolitan Area Planning Commission) grant funding to spend; close to half of that has been used. Expenditures will continue to be monitored. Alice noted that an item on the spreadsheet may need to be corrected.

Doug Frey asked if the Committee members received the “3 Month Summary” Word document. He did not. Alice will email the document directly to him, and Dan will check that Doug’s email is included on the Transportation Committee email list.

Dan Carty used the data on rides provided by Uber to create a box plot to help visualize ride usage (see Supporting Document “Parsed Uber Data with Box Plot”). He wanted to follow up on Sandy Lasky’s previous question about outliers – rides that were longer or more expensive than the typical rides. He shared the documents with the Committee. What the data shows is that 50% of the rides had wait times of 12-23 minutes, with the maximum wait time of 37 minutes and minimum wait time of 3 minutes. When ride distance was plotted, the average was on the low end, meaning that the majority of rides were of short distance, mainly in town. There were some outliers that reflected rides to the Boston area. Dan C reported that looking at the duration and cost of rides followed a similar distribution with the majority of ride durations and ride costs skewing to the lower end. In fact, 50% of the rides cost \$12-\$22 and 75% of rides cost less than \$23-\$24. Dan C noted one ride was very expensive at \$79 – Alice reported that this was a surge price.

Dan C shared the “Uber Movement Dashboard Map” with the Committee. This map shows trip origins or destinations, with dots for each trip. The color is more intense in an area with more trips.

Sandy L noted that there were a lot of Route 20 trips between Marlborough and Wayland. If this trend continues, this might reflect the need for a shuttle along this route, roughly between Price Chopper and Stop and Shop. Perhaps the shuttle could run 9:00 AM-2:00 PM, or if demand is more spread out through the day, there could be an on-demand shuttle or an argument for microtransit through MWRTA?

We have a good amount of data now, with 463 Uber rides. In July 2021, there were 129 Uber rides, with 14 unique riders. In June 2021, there were 93 completed Uber trips, with 10 unique riders. Most of these rides were near/in Sudbury, with just a few rides to Boston or vicinity. It was suggested that this data will be important to share with MWRTA at the September Board Retreat (Debra will be attending this meeting).

It was noted that this data reflects ridership of a self-selected group of residents, who had to have smartphones and meet certain criteria to register. If we were to offer to the general public, ridership could increase significantly.

Debra Galloway reported that the Senior Center data shows that the recent outreach activities have had an impact. Ana Cristina Oliveira, Outreach Specialist at the Sudbury Senior Center, was able to share that there were 9 new Uber registrants in July and 1 in August, and 11 new registrants to the Taxi program in July, and 6 in August. Most of these newly registered participants were from the targeted outreach locations.

Ana Cristina shared with the Committee that she noticed a ride that was very long and expensive that was just taken in August, for 39 miles and a \$70 cost. Members speculated that the rider may have asked to go to more than one location, or traffic may have caused a longer route for this ride.

## **Other Items**

### **The MWRTA Advisory Board Retreat**

Dan C asked Committee members if they have ideas or suggestions to the MWRTA Advisory Board retreat meeting in September. Alice suggested perhaps the MWRTA would consider extending the Dial-a-Ride to help support WAV (wheelchair accessible vehicle) rides. Doug reports that the Boston Globe had an article on a new program called RideFlex which is providing accessible vehicles for Microtransit support (Uber and Lyft). RideFlex is provided by a third-party company and has mostly been available in the Boston area. Is this going to become available in the MetroWest suburbs?

The Committee also would like Debra to share the ride data that shows the demand for rides along Route 20, indicating a possible need for Microtransit and/or shuttle service. The Route 20 corridor has grown significantly in the past several years, with new housing developments, along with additional shopping plazas. The growth has occurred within Sudbury and also in the neighboring Route 20 towns of Wayland and Marlborough. Due to high fixed costs, the MWRTA may need to have a partner to offer Microtransit, such as VIA or one of the TNCs (Transportation Network Company – such as Uber or Lyft).

Four items were identified as important with regard to the upcoming MWRTA Advisory Board retreat:

- 1) WAV rides (wheelchair accessible vehicles)
- 2) Route 20 as a focus for expanded transportation options, possibly Microtransit
- 3) The Transportation Committee would like to share the data and results from our current pilot studies with the MWRTA Board at the retreat (Debra to follow up).

- 4) How we have worked with Taxi companies to offer transportation, especially for medical appointments.

Alice shared that we do have ridership data from the taxi companies to share. All of the data that is now available from our pilot transportation programs will be compiled to share with the MWRTA Advisory Board and staff, as well as with the Sudbury Select Board this fall.

#### Long-term Vision of the Transportation Committee

Initial thoughts include:

1. The needs assessment indicated that there is a wide range of stakeholders who could potentially benefit from expanded transportation options. Although our pilot programs have necessarily focused on a smaller group of residents who have greater need for transportation support, when we are looking forward we can consider the wider range of users, such as parents of children needing after school transportation.
2. Sustainability – how do we set up the town to sustain expanded transportation services? It doesn't make sense for a Committee to be responsible for transportation expansion and operation in the long term.

#### Administrative

Dan C asked about the MWRTA Advisory Board Disability representation. Debra explained that the representative rotates among the Board member towns. In the last few years, towns did not have a representative and the MetroWest Independent Living center Director acted as the representative. Debra will find out when Sudbury has a turn at sending a disability representative, and also offer to send a representative sooner even if it is not Sudbury's turn.

Sandy L reported that the Sudbury Council on Aging (COA) did not meet in July, but she will share information from our meeting with them at the August meeting next week and seek their input.

Doug will meet with the Sudbury Commission on Disability in a couple of weeks and also expects to report on the Transportation updates and seek input. Doug noted that it would be helpful for someone to be responsible for taking care of updating Kay Bell's Transportation Chart as time goes on.

#### Meeting Minutes

Minutes of the 7/23/21 meeting were reviewed, and edits made. Debra read the following to be inserted into the Minutes:

Debra clarified that the MWRTA Advisory Board reserves a seat for a person representing the disability community, and the representative usually rotates among the towns on the board. In the last couple of years, the towns that were responsible for a representative did not have one, and the MetroWest Independent Living Center Director filled in as the representative.

Alice moved to approve the edited minutes, Debra seconded, and the motion passed 5-0.

**Next Meeting**

The next Transportation Committee meeting will be Friday, August 20th at 10:30 AM via Zoom.

**Adjournment**

Sandy Lasky moved to adjourn, Alice seconded, and the motion passed 5-0 and the meeting adjourned at 11:28 AM.